

Mexican-Origin Population in California: Health Fact Sheet



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The Population

United States

- Total Latinos in the U.S.: **35 million**
- Total of Mexican origin: **21 million** (representing 60% of the Latinos in the U.S.)
Of those:
 - Born in Mexico: **8.5 million**
 - Naturalized: **< 2 million**
 - Non-citizens: **6.5 million**¹

California

- Total Latino population: **11 million** (32% of state's total population of 34 million)²
- Total Mexican-origin population in California: **8.5 million** (25% of state's total population)³
- **44%** of the Mexican immigrants in the U.S. are in California (3.8 million). Los Angeles is the main urban destination.⁴
- Of the foreign-born Mexicans in California, about **825,000** are naturalized and nearly **3 million** are non-citizens.⁵

Agricultural Workers

- There are **1.3 million** agricultural workers in California—an industry that generates nearly **\$30 billion** annually.⁶
- **91%** of California's hired agricultural workers were born in Mexico.⁷ Upon entry many undocumented workers find employment in agriculture and construction.⁸
- **1 out of every 3** Mexican immigrants in California is in a farmworker household.⁹

Southern California Day Laborers

- **77.5%** of sampled Southern California day laborers are from Mexico. Almost all are male and undocumented, yet nearly **¼** have been in the U.S. for more than 11 years.¹⁰

Undocumented

- Total estimated population of unauthorized Mexicans in the U.S.: about **4.5 million**.¹¹
- Undocumented workers generate goods and services worth more than **\$120 billion** a year in the U.S.¹²
- During the 1990s Mexican immigrants sent home some **\$33 billion** in remittances. In 2001 alone, the total was **\$8 billion**.¹³



Sources:

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Health Status

- 1.2 million Mexicans in the U.S. have been diagnosed with diabetes.¹⁴
- In 1997, 500,000 Latinos in California had diabetes, the majority of Mexican origin. Many others may be unaware that they have the disease.¹⁵
- In 1999, 25% of people with AIDS in California were Latino. 40% of the total are of Mexican origin; and of those, 86% were born in Mexico.¹⁶ Between July 1999 and June 2000, 29% of new AIDS cases in California were among Latinos.¹⁷
- 17% of California Latinas have invasive cervical cancer—the state's highest annual incidence rate (the rate is 7.4% for non-Latina white women).¹⁸
- The teen birth rate for Latinos is nearly four times the birth rate for non-Latino white teens in California.¹⁹
- Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death among Latinos in California and nationwide, as well as among the Mexican-origin population.²⁰
- In a representative-sample survey in California, nearly 32% of male agricultural workers said that they had never been to a doctor's office or a clinic in their lives, while only 48% had been to a doctor or clinic at least once during the previous two years. Nearly one in five male subjects (18%) had at least two of three risk factors for chronic disease: high serum cholesterol, high blood pressure, or obesity.²¹

IN A REPRESENTATIVE-SAMPLE SURVEY OF AGRICULTURAL WORKERS, ONLY 7% WERE ENROLLED IN ANY GOVERNMENT PROGRAM SERVING LOW-INCOME PEOPLE.²²



Health Insurance

- In California, almost 1/3 of Latino children and 41% of nonelderly adult Latinos are uninsured, the majority of Mexican origin. There are 2.25 million uninsured Latino adults in California, roughly twice as many as in any other group.²³
- In California, only 43% of Latinos have job-based insurance, compared to 71% of non-Latino whites.²⁴
- More than 1.5 million undocumented children and adults are uninsured and have no opportunities to obtain coverage through California's public programs.²⁵
- In 1999, Latinos made up 26.5% of the uninsured nationwide.²⁶
- In the United States, 70% of the agricultural-worker population does not have health insurance.²⁷

Border Region Health

- In the U.S.-Mexico border region, about 3 million people do not have health insurance.²⁸
- In 1997, the four U.S. border states with Mexico accounted for 52% of reported cases of tuberculosis. In Mexico, 23% of reported cases were in border states.²⁹

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